

# Trapping & Furbearer 2004 - 2005



## Management Regulations

**Note: No carcass turn-in required for fisher, river otter or bobcat this season. Hunting regulations are found in the standard abstracts.**

### TRAPPING REGULATIONS

#### OPEN SEASON (ALL DATES INCLUSIVE)

Species	Open Season
• Fox <sup>†</sup> , Coyote <sup>†</sup> , Weasel, Bobcat <sup>†x</sup>	Nov. 1 - Nov. 30
• Fisher <sup>†</sup>	Nov. 1 - Nov. 22
• Mink <sup>†</sup> , River otter <sup>†</sup>	Nov. 1 - Dec. 15
• Beaver <sup>†</sup>	Nov. 1 - April 15, 2005
• Raccoon, Opossum, Skunk, Muskrat	Nov. 1 - Feb. 28, 2005

**Pelt Sealing:** Pelts of beaver, otter, fisher, wild foxes, wild mink and coyote must be sealed with official seals by an agent of the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife within four working days from the end of season for each species. Pelts of bobcat must be tagged with official seals within four working days from the date harvested.

**\*Carcass Turn In:** Trappers/hunters taking bobcat must turn in to the Division the carcass of each animal before the pelt will be sealed.

**Bobcat Zone:** Bobcat may be taken by trapping in Massachusetts Wildlife Management Zones 01 - 08.

**Trap Registration:** All traps used on the land of another must have a valid registration number (obtained and validated from Boston office) embedded or cut into the trap. The assigned number, including letter and figures, must be at least 1/8" high and legible at all times. The trap must also have attached a metal tag bearing the owner's name, town and registration number. Once obtained, your registration number is yours for life, but must be renewed every two years. If you wish to trap on another's land, you must maintain a current certification of that registration number. Initial fee is \$5.00. Renewal fee is \$5.00.

**Trapper Education:** All first-time trappers must successfully complete the free trapper education class of the Hunter Education Program, 508-792-7434, before they may obtain a trapping registration number or trap on the land of another. Bailey and Hancock traps may not be used, set, tended, or placed unless the trapper has successfully completed a training course in their use. The trapper's certificate of completion must be carried on the person when using such traps.

### CERTAIN TRAPS PROHIBITED

The only traps which may be used for the taking of fur-bearing mammals are cage or box type traps and common rat traps. Hancock and Bailey type cage traps may be used only when the trapper has been trained in their use, and may be used only for the taking of beaver. Common type rat traps may be used only for the taking of weasels.

Steel-jaw leghold traps, padded jaw traps, body-gripping (Conibear) traps (see below), snares, deadfalls, and any traps other than those specified above are **PROHIBITED**. Such traps may not be set, tended, used, or possessed in the field.

There is a detailed procedure for obtaining a special permit to use a body gripping (Conibear) trap for certain types of wildlife damage. Contact your local DFW District Office for details.

**Mandatory Training:** Persons using Bailey or Hancock traps must take the trapper education class offered by the Hunter Education Program (See Trapper Education).

**Reporting stolen traps:** A trapper must report loss or theft of a trap in writing to the Division of Law Enforcement within 48 hours of the loss or theft, or remain responsible for its use. The report should include the number and type of traps, the date, time, place and circumstances of the loss or theft. Such reports must be signed under the pains and penalties of perjury. Stolen traps should be reported to:

#### INLAND:

**Inland Law Enforcement**  
**Attn: "Trap Loss"**  
**183 Milk Street**  
**Westboro, MA 01581**

#### COASTAL:

**Coastal Law Enforcement**  
**Attn: "Trap Loss"**  
**Building #45**  
**349 Lincoln St., Hingham, MA 02043**

**Staking** is not a recognized practice and conveys no special trapping privileges.

A **beaver house or lodge** is a den comprised of an aggregate of sticks and mud which is constructed or built by beaver and which is either free-standing in water or connected to an embankment.

### IT IS ILLEGAL TO ...

1. Trap before 6:00AM on opening day of any trapping season.
2. Possess or use a trap on another's land from April 16 to 6:00AM of the following November 1.
3. Possess the green pelt of any furbearer except during the open season and for 10 days thereafter.
4. Possess or control an unregistered trap on another's land.
5. Possess or control another's registered trap except with his written permission.
6. Trap on posted land of another without his written consent.
7. Trap in a public way, cart road or path commonly used by humans or domestic animals.
8. Use poison or use a trap that takes more than one animal at a time.
9. Destroy, mutilate, or spring another's trap or remove any animal from another's trap without his written authorization.

10. Fail to check and remove an animal from each trap at least once in each calendar day between 4:00 AM and 10:00 PM.
11. Tear open or disturb a muskrat or beaver house or beaver dam, except under permit.
12. Trap fur-bearing mammals with any trap other than a cage or box type trap, or a common rat trap.
13. Use, set, or place a Hancock or Bailey type beaver trap without having completed a training course, or to use, set, or place such trap except when set in water or upon a beaver lodge, dam, stump, or other above water protrusion surrounded by water.
14. Pick up any road-killed furbearers during the closed season, or to pick up road-killed furbearers during the open season without a valid trapping license.
15. Alter, tamper with or reapply a furbearer tag or seal, or possess any altered or resealed tag (unless it is destroyed to such a condition that it could not be reappplied).
16. Possess any pelt bearing an altered or resealed tag or seal.

### PROBLEM ANIMAL CONTROL TRAPPING (PAC)

Problem Animal Control agents are private individuals who are licensed by the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife to assist the public in situations involving sick animals or animals causing property damage. PAC agents are only authorized to handle the following animals: striped skunk, muskrat, raccoon, weasel, red and gray fox, porcupine, rats, mice, voles\*, red, gray or flying squirrel, opossum, chipmunk, European rabbit, cottontail rabbit, woodchuck, snapping turtle, moles, pigeons, house sparrows, starlings and bats\*.

*\*Certain species of bats and voles are not covered under this authorization.*

**To become a Problem Animal Control (PAC) agent:** You must possess a valid trapping license and register and tag all traps and submit an application to the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. Municipal officials must have permit to conduct activities but fee is exempt. Applications can be obtained through the Westboro Field Headquarters (508)-792-7270 ext. 120.

PAC agents must be at least 18 years or older.

Cost for PAC License: \$100.00

#### First-time PAC trappers must:

- Complete a mandatory trapper education class.

• Pass a written exam on biology, handling, capture techniques, laws and regulations, animal welfare, diseases and parasites. Applicants who fail the exam may retake the exam after a two month period.

**Recertification:** Permittees are required to attend a Division PAC workshop once every three years from the time of successful completion of the first exam.

Animals taken under Problem Animal Control permits or their carcasses or any part cannot be retained, sold, bartered, or exchanged for consideration, **except** during the open trapping season for that species.

**Reporting:** Licenses are valid from January 1 to December 31. PAC agents receive a reporting book in which they must record transactions as they occur. All agents must keep a record of all animal complaints handled or investigated by them. Record books must be available for inspection by an Environmental Police Officer (EPO) or officials of the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife at any reasonable time.

Annual report forms from record books must be submitted yearly to the Division, no later than January 31. **Failure to submit annual report or provide required information, or making false statements in the report is cause for suspension, revocation, or non-renewal of the permit.**

**TRAPPING LICENSES AND  
REGISTRATION NUMBERS**

Trapping licenses are valid from Jan 1. through Dec. 31 of the calendar year. Licenses may be obtained at most city or town halls, at Division installations in Boston, Westboro, Belchertown, Pittsfield, Buzzards Bay, West Boylston, and Acton and at other assorted locations (certain sporting goods stores, et cetera).

Trapping licenses are required for anyone 12 years of age and older. Trapping license and registration certificates must be carried with you while trapping. (Below prices do not include \$5.00 for mandatory Wildland Conservation Stamp).

T1 Resident Citizen Trapping	\$30.50
T2 Res. Citizen Minor Trapping Age 12-17	\$ 6.50
T3 Res. Citizen Trapping Age 65-69	\$15.25
S3 Res. Citizen Sporting, Age 70 and over	Free
(includes trapping)	
DT Duplicate license Trapping	\$ 2.50
Trap Registration Number (Initial)	\$ 5.00
Trap Registration Number (Renewal)	\$ 5.00
Non-resident trapping permit (Boston Office)	\$200.00

No license is required by any legal resident of the Commonwealth or member of his immediate family for trapping on land owned or leased by him which is used principally for agriculture, if he is actually domiciled on that land.

**FURBUYER LICENSES**

A Furbuyer is any person who is dealing in raw furs. A valid Massachusetts furbuyer license is required for any person who is receiving, buying, or bartering the raw pelts of wild animals. This includes persons handling *green* (a pelt which has not been dried, cured or tanned) or *raw* (a pelt [including green pelt] which has been dried, fleshed, or cured) pelts. A permit is not required if a skin or skins are purchased from a licensed fur dealer, hunter or trapper for the personal use of the purchaser and not for sale.

Licenses are valid from January 1 to December 31. Furbuyers receive a reporting book in which they must record transactions of pelts received as they occur. Log books are open to inspection by Environmental Police Officers or any agents of the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife at any reasonable time.

Furbuyer annual report forms from record books are required to be initialed by an EPO and submitted yearly to the Division no later than April 1.

Costs of Furbuyer Licenses are as follows ...	
Resident	\$30.00
Non Resident Citizen/Alien	\$90.00

Applications for furbuyer licenses, or a listing of current furbuyers can be obtained by calling **617-626-1575**, or by writing the Boston office of the Division Fisheries and Wildlife.

**SALE OF PELTS**

**Exporting raw furs:** When shipping raw fur pelts by any carrier, the contents of the package and the shipper's hunting or trapping license number must be listed on the outside of the package.

The destruction or removal of any identifying tag or label that is attached to a container in which skins are shipped is unlawful.

All river otter and bobcat require CITES tags to be lawfully exported for sale.

**Pelts** of coyote, wild fox, wild mink, gray wolf, bobcat, lynx, fisher, marten, river otter, or beaver may not be sold in Massachusetts unless tagged by the state or province of origin.

**LAW ENFORCEMENT AND  
REPORTING VIOLATIONS**

Trapping in Massachusetts is a highly regulated activity. Regulations and laws are restrictive and can be complex. Know the current laws and regulations before you trap. Environmental Police Officers enforce trapping laws.

If you are aware of illegal trapping activities, or suspect a violation of any wildlife law, Environmental Police Officers can be reached at:

**Toll Free 1-800-632-8075 or at  
617-727-6398**

Violations and Penalties - Trapping license can be revoked for one year in addition to other penalties and fines as well as restitutions of up to \$1000 and/or six months in jail. Traps and other equipment can be seized and forfeited to the Commonwealth. In addition, Problem Animal Control Licenses and/or Furbearer licenses can be revoked, plus fines and penalties assessed, and additionally, fur products can be seized and forfeited to the Commonwealth.

**BOATING SAFETY**

While boating and canoeing from September 15 to May 15 all canoe or kayak occupants must wear a United States Coast Guard approved Personal Floatation Device.

**LANDOWNER LIABILITIES**

Any landowner permitting use of his property for recreation without charging a fee is not liable for injuries to recreational users or their property, except in cases of willful, wanton or reckless conduct by the owner. (Chapter 21, Section 17C MGL).

**RABIES**

Rabies in raccoons has been confirmed in all counties in Massachusetts **except** Dukes and Nantucket. Wear rubber gloves when skinning furbearers. If you believe you have been exposed to a rabid animal, scrub the wound thoroughly with soap and water and seek medical attention immediately. Isolate and preserve the dead animal by refrigeration as soon as possible. Contact your local board of health. For a free pamphlet on rabies and furbearers write any Division office or call (508)792-7270.

**FURTHER INFORMATION**

This pamphlet contains abstracts of essential portions of the laws and regulations dealing with various aspects of furbearer trapping and management. It is not the complete law and is subject to change. (MGL Ch. 131 and 321 CMR).



**MassWildlife**

**FURBEARER CHECK STATIONS**

Check stations are open Monday - Friday (excluding holidays). The following are Division furbearer check stations:

**Call check stations prior to  
bringing pelts in for sealing.**

Western District - Pittsfield	<b>413-447-9789</b>
Conn. Valley District - Belchertown	<b>413-323-7632</b>
Central District - West Boylston	<b>508-835-3607</b>
Northeast District - Acton	<b>978-263-4347</b>
Southeast District - Buzzards Bay	<b>508-759-3406</b>
Sunderland Hatchery - Sunderland	<b>413-665-4680</b>
Bitzer Fish Hatchery - Montague	<b>413-367-2477</b>
Martin Burns WMA Hqtrs - Newbury	<b>978-465-8012</b>
DFW Field Headquarters - Westboro	<b>508-792-7270</b>

*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*  
**Division of  
Fisheries & Wildlife**  
251 Causeway Street, Suite 400

Boston, MA 02114

(617) 626-1590

[www.masswildlife.org](http://www.masswildlife.org)